IAA Standard Categories:

» Positive Human Relationships

» Appropriate Indoor and Outdoor Environments

» Effective Programming

» Strong Partnerships

» Effective Administration

» Effective Staffing and Professional Development

» Youth Development Principles and Practices

» Outcome Measurement

» Fiscal Management

» Advocacy

Positive Human Relationships

☐ Staff relate to all children and youth in positive and respectful ways; staff are dedicated to having fun and being involved; staff model personal interest in youth; allow for one-to-one time with all youth; staff connect in ways that support youths' feelings and ideas

☐ Staff encourage youth to interact positively with peers, families, community, school, and afterschool staff; children demonstrate good conflict resolution skills; staff and youth develop a plan for policies for behavior; staff seek input from youth in order to determine both the cause and solution of conflicts and negative behavior; staff use positive techniques to guide the behavior of children and youth

☐ Staff respond appropriately to the individual needs of children and youth; staff work to accommodate youths' needs through meetings with parents, teachers, and youth; program builds upon children and youths' individual strengths; staff interact with children and youth to help them learn; staff support children's success in learning

☐ Staff provide opportunities for meaningful engagement of participants' family members; staff and families interact with each other in positive ways; staff provide regular communication and support services for parents; staff use arrival and departure as information-sharing time with parents

☐ Staff are patient, fair, and listen to youth and each other; show respect for all staff and students and model positive relationships

☐ Adult to youth ratio is between 1:10 and 1:15 for youth ages six and older; adult to child ratio is between 1:8 and 1:12 for children under age six

☐ Staff encourage children and youth to make choices and to become more responsible

☐ Staff is sensitive to the culture and language of children and youth; staff model inclusion/equity values in their work; program environment is affirming/inclusive of many identification groups

Appropriate Indoor and Outdoor Environments

☐ The program's indoor space meets the needs of children and youth; environment is suitable for all offered activities; adequate materials and supplies are available; wide variety of books, games, and art supplies; indoor space allows children and youth to take initiative and explore their interests

☐ The outdoor play area meets the needs of children and youth, and the equipment allows them to be independent and creative; the outdoor play area is clean, safe, and hazard-free; access to outdoor program space is supervised during program hours

☐ Program staff provide an environment that protects and enhances the health and development of children and youth; safe, healthy, and nurturing environment; environment supports mutual respect, rapport, and fairness; the physical safety and security of children and youth are protected; during hours of operation, an adult oversees exiting and entering of members and visitors; ensures entering safe program space

☐ There are a variety of spaces (small group, large play areas, quiet areas); planned cozy areas available in other programming space locations; spaces available in program to promote quiet reflection, conversations, and safe interactions

☐ The temperature is comfortable and the space has adequate ventilation and noise and light levels

☐ Regular safety checks (indoors and outdoors) of equipment conducted; daily upkeep of all routine care furnishings; indoor and outdoor equipment meet safety standards and are inspected, modified, and documented

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☐ Written emergency procedures are readily accessible by staff

☐ At least one complete first aid kit and fire extinguisher is accessible and visible from program space

☐ Site is physically accessible to youth/staff/families with disabilities

Effective Programming

☐ Children and youth can choose from a wide variety of activities including free time; learning opportunities are available for youth to belong and form friendships, and to develop personal responsibility, self-direction, dance, music, leadership, problem solving, character, communication, healthy lifestyles, cooperation, safety, physical activity, theater, art, civic, literacy, career/workforce, team work, technology, nutrition, social, emotional and cultural skills

☐ Balance of academics, homework assistance, and enrichment programming exist; programs/activities are designed to allow youth to master at least one program component in academic and non-academic areas

☐ The daily schedule is flexible and offers a favorable social and emotional climate, physical security, independence, stimulation and youth centered/age-appropriate activities to meet the needs of all children and youth

☐ Activities reflect the mission and goals of the program and promote the development of all the children and youth in the program

☐ Staff have all materials and supplies ready to begin all activities; there are sufficient materials to support program activities; activities planned with enough materials and staff members are prepared to lead activities

☐ The program serves healthy foods and drinks that meet the nutrition needs of children and youth

☐ Participants experience and learn about diversity

☐ Program provides opportunities where participants work can be showcased; youth contributions and accomplishments are acknowledged

☐ Opportunities to learn through experiential learning (do-reflect-apply) and real world contexts are available; use strategies to engage students in learning

☐ Established schedules are known to staff, participants, and families; complete program schedules are posted prior to the beginning of the program cycle and are kept up-to-date

☐ Programming is based on best practices derived from child and youth development research

☐ Staff and youth learn to recognize/challenge stereotypes, biases, and discrimination; activities/curriculum introduce youth to groups with different backgrounds/experiences than their own; activities/experiences increase knowledge/connection to youth culture, language, gender, and other identification groups

☐ Daily time for outdoor play is part of schedule

Strong Partnerships

☐ A plan for family and community involvement is developed, activated, reviewed, updated, and supported; program involves families and community in program events and decision-making, planning, and implementing roles

☐ Program provides families with information about community resources to meet their needs; staff communicate with family about youth experiences and activities

☐ Program builds partnerships as part of sustainability efforts with youth, families, municipal government, businesses, organizations, and institutions for strengthened funding, expanded volunteering, increased program quality, broadened resources and materials, and visible advocacy for the program

☐ Program provides opportunities for literacy and educational experiences for families and participants; program strengthens family/youth relationships and communication

☐ Youth are involved in the community through planning and participating in service learning projects; links are built between youth and community

☐ Program information is regularly communicated (across language groups) with families, community partners, and schools to coordinate support and opportunities for youth; staff, families, and schools share information to encourage and support the development of youth

☐ Program collaborates with the mission and vision of local schools to support program development

☐ Program coordinates staff development activities with those of school and community partners

☐ Program collaborates with other afterschool programs

☐ Programs are tailored to address community and/or neighborhood needs

☐ Program stakeholders, partners, and staff communicate program's vision, purpose, and goals in many settings across the community

Effective Administration

- ☐ Staff/child ratios and group sizes permit the staff to appropriately meet the needs of children and youth

- ☐ Develops fiscal infrastructure/management system that includes an approved budget, periodic review of budget, and appropriate tracking of expenses and record keeping

- ☐ Considers afterschool opportunities as added learning time that complements school day; establishes strong links to the school day; learning standards are connected to afterschool program; learning opportunities in afterschool program are connected to but different from school day

- ☐ Employs strategies for program improvement and staff development that are based on regular assessment of youth outcomes, staff performance, and/or program quality

- ☐ Program policies and procedures are available to, and responsive to, the needs of children, youth, and families in the community

- ☐ Staff (paid, volunteer, and substitute) receive appropriate support and communication opportunities to make program effective and efficient and to share new professional ideas; staff from different program offerings meet as a group to plan or coordinate prior to the start of a program cycle and regularly during the program cycle

- ☐ Program policies, procedures, and schedules ensure that staff, youth, and parents understand expectations; develops, implements, and shares approved safety and health plans and procedures with staff, youth, and family members

- ☐ Develops and manages effective arrival and dismissal procedures with staff and families; clearly defined, written/posted organization policies on how to enter and exit building

- ☐ Program policies and procedures are in place to protect the safety and health of the children and youth

- ☐ Staff (paid, volunteer, and substitute) are given an orientation to the job before working with children and youth

- ☐ Complete and current enrollment and registration documents for all participants are on file including emergency information for each participant

- ☐ Conducts all required fire and safety drills; emergency plans are easily accessible and rehearsed

- ☐ Recruit, screen, orientate, manage, and train staff, substitutes, and volunteers

- ☐ Program develops a long-term plan for sustaining the afterschool program; involves participants, families, staff, and board members in long-term decision making and planning

- ☐ Staff has passed background check

- ☐ Program has a written statement of mission, vision, and goals

- ☐ Program has an effective marketing strategy that publicizes the program and its achievements within the school and broader community

- ☐ Fee structure allows for any family to participate in the program

Effective Staffing and Professional Development

- ☐ Program staff (administrator = overall direction of the program; director = daily operations of the program; support staff = supervision and guidance of children in the program under the direction of the director) receive training and attend ongoing professional development activities both within and outside of the organization that support their own growth; program staff maintain current knowledge of field

- ☐ Program support staff have training in child and youth development, planning activities, community outreach, service learning, group guidance, and/or working with families; a majority of support staff have one or more years of experience

- ☐ Mentoring and training supports working with diverse populations; program staff and volunteers are culturally aware in working with participants

- ☐ Program staff (administrator, director, support staff) are trained in CPR, first aid, universal precautions, and mandatory child abuse reporter training; updated listing of staff who are CPR and first aid certified is readily accessible

- ☐ Program includes benefits and competitive wages; pays staff for planning time (developing and preparing activities) and to do paperwork

- ☐ Program administrator/director assesses job performance and satisfaction among support staff and volunteers and makes improvements where necessary; program administrator/director gives feedback and is a role model to improve staff performance; support staff can request guidance from program administrator/director

- ☐ Program administrator has a degree in child or youth development or a related field, including coursework in administration; program administrator has a minimum of two years of relevant job experience

- ☐ Program director has a degree in child or youth development or a related field; program director has a minimum of two years of relevant job experience

- ☐ Program provides professional development opportunities related to diversity/equity

☐ Program staff are knowledgeable about youths' different learning styles/special needs and adapt programming accordingly

Youth Development Principles and Practices

☐ Youth have opportunities to explore, program plan, and make choices based on their skills and interests; members are empowered with freedom/latitude to plan their time and pursue interests; youth have multiple opportunities to make plans for projects and activities

☐ Youth development principles are infused into programming; youth have opportunities to partner with adults; staff share ownership of most activities with youth, providing guidance and facilitation; participants are involved in program planning and development; program views youth as individuals with strengths and skills; staff support youth as partners

☐ Program affords participants opportunities to express their ideas, concerns, and opinions; youth voice and ownership of program is encouraged; youth voice is respected/valued

☐ Program activities enable participants to develop life skills, a sense of belonging, resiliency, and self-esteem

Outcome Measurement

☐ Plans for participant and program evaluation include gathering both qualitative and quantitative data; includes formal and informal feedback from stakeholders (youth, parents, teachers, staff, advisory council, etc.) in program evaluation; youths' interests, needs, and satisfaction with program regularly assessed

☐ Uses objective data to measure participants' learning progress; creates an internal method for assessing student engagement levels; regularly assesses youth outcomes; decision making based on student performance

☐ Program has measurable program goals/objectives that are aligned with the program vision, mission and identified needs; short and long term goals defined with all program partners

☐ Makes evaluation summaries available to the general public and community stakeholders

☐ Evaluates for continuous improvement, identifying additional resources, and assessing program effectiveness; buy-in for the continuous improvement process and evaluation secured from the advisory council or governing body and all stakeholders

☐ Program participates, when available, in local, state, and national review and recognition systems

Fiscal Management

☐ Funding is diversified and sustainable to operate within a budget

☐ Program seeks financial support from parents, businesses, government agencies, private foundations, individuals, or other available resources

☐ Budget mirrors vision, mission and goals

☐ Program updates and monitors budget on regular basis

☐ Existence of community linkages, partnerships, and connections support enhanced services; strong partnerships exist to support the program and services from which all partners benefit; long-term alliances ensure continued funding is in place

☐ Program administration understands policy issues and funding streams

Advocacy

☐ Increases awareness of public and policymakers focus on need for a continuum of services that support youth learning outside of school time; increases public awareness of needs of school-age programs; advocates for school-age programs as part of children's and youths' learning

☐ Constituency building activities occur intentionally and effectively; program is actively involved in and leads community mobilization efforts to affect funding levels and policies; program partnerships, linkages, and connections include community outreach and advocacy as a goal

☐ Evidence of program quality is used to build the case for the necessity of afterschool as part of a larger field-building effort

What is Afterschool?

Afterschool programs provide experiences that are meaningful and beneficial to children, youth, families, and communities by offering safe, engaging, and enriching environments for children and youth when they are not in school. Quality afterschool programs utilize a youth development philosophy that incorporates the strengths and assets of youth to build their skills and broaden their experiences.

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